The Demon Machine (1924)
(online sources)

Choreographed 1924 by Gertrud Bodenwieser (1890-1959)
Reconstructed 1960 by Emmy Steinninger-Taussig/Barbara Cuckson
Filmed 1969 Bodenwieser Studio St Marys Australia by Barbara Cuckson
Dancers; Diane Cassidy, Margaret Cuckson, Nadia Konarew, Lisabeth Martin, Marilyn Redman
Music composed by Lisa Maria Mayer
Pianist Robert Cuckson
Filmed to document the choreography by dancers trained in Bodenwieser style
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u7OGE0nFqg (published online 6 Jan 2014)

You Tube Clip of Demon Machine from Spotlight on Australia Ballet (1948)
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BleR5S7VUcc

Spotlight on Australia Ballet (1948)
Includes video of Bodenwieser’s The Demon Machine and Waterlillies
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BleR5S7VUcc (published online 2012)

Dance Notation Bureau
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D5eqFZg1wrY
(Published on 27 Jul 2012)
Demon Machine staged from the Labanotation score. http://dancenotation.org/catalog/Edit...

Other:
Eileen Kramer on Gertrud Bodenwieser’s Teachings
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IMGEXuC98-A
(Published on 19 May 2014)
Bodenwieser dancer Eileen Kramer (born 1914) interviewed by Barbara Cuckson at Rozelle School of Visual Arts, Sydney, 2014.
Filmed by Marion Ives.

Shona Dunlop in Wind Dancer
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PQuCWb1q6gQ
Clip from full length documentary film about Shona Dunlop MacTavish (former dancer with Bodenwieser Modern Expressive Ballet)
Gertrud Bodenwieser's *Demon Machine* was first performed in Vienna in 1924. It was a work for five dancers and dealt with the effects on man of the machine age. It was danced to specially created music, which has not been published, by Lisa Maria Mayer. The work immediately attracted critical acclaim. The British critic Arnold Haskell wrote in 1926: 'These beautiful girls actually became a great powerful efficient machine, and the effect was as inspiring as a visit to the engine room of some great works'. In the early 1930s *Demon Machine* won a prize a both the Reunione internazionale della danza in Florence and the Concours internationale de la danse in Paris.

One of the dancers on whom the work was created in Vienna in 1923, Hede Juer, has written about the creation of the work:

'The work fell into two parts. In the first part the dancers moved weightlessly, untroubled by any problems, in paradisial innocence, through space; while Bodenwieser, as the evil spirit of the machine, kept in the background squatting, staring, rigid. Suddenly a crashing chord and Bodenwieser's first abrupt, thumping movement shattered the innocence and peace. Now with ever-increasing force the demon drew the people closer, gradually overpowering their resistance, until they suddenly became grouped in front of the demon as parts of a dehumanised, soul-less mechanism, completely under the demonic compulsion. Now the machine began to work, as presses, pistons, wheels and seemingly with all the reciprocating motions that the observer sees who looks into the heart of moving machinery; and gathering speed as it worked, and exerting its unrelenting force and momentum. Music and movement stopped abruptly, the power switched off. No trace of humanity is left.'

In Australia *Demon Machine* became a staple item in the repertoire of the Bodenwieser Ballet. A version of it, called 'The machine', was performed by the Bodenwieser Troupe ('Seven Famous Dancing Viennese Girls') in two J. C. Williamson revues *London Casino Revue: Folies d'Amour* and *Around the Clock* in which some of Bodenwieser's dancers appeared shortly after their arrival in Australia in 1939. It also appeared on the program for the company's first Australian tour of of 1939-1940. Programs for those first Australian performances do not identify the cast other than 'Ballet group', which must have been selected from the six dancers of the group for that tour: Emmy Taussig, Evelyn Ippen, Melitta Melzer, Edith Shorter, Bettina Browne and Katja Georgiewa.

Australian program notes over the period that the work was performed gave the following explanation of the work: 'The machine gains ascendancy over the souls of the people instead of man dominating the machine. The vital problem of our age'.

**Bibliography:**


10 items created by: NLAdance on 2010-01-01 00:00:00.0

**Tags:**

**Comments:** No comments yet - Add one!

**Rating:** unrated
Poses from The Demon machine / D'Ora Benda
Benda, D'Ora
[ Photograph : 1936 ]
View online
At National Library

The Demon machine in action, as produced in Williamson and Tait's revue, Around the clock in New York, London and Australian capital cities 1936, 1939
[ Photograph : 1939 ]
View online
At National Library

The Demon machine, l. to r. Coralie Hinkley, Margaret Chapple, Moira Claux, Eileen Cramer, Mardi Watchorn / Walter Kirby
Kirby, Walter
[ Photograph : 1947 ]
View online
At National Library

Papers of Gertrud Bodenwieser
Bodenwieser, Gertrud, 1890-1959
At National Library

Note
This collection contains press cuttings, photographs, posters, programs, costume designs and assorted printed material relating to the life and career of Gertrud Bodenwieser and her Bodenwieser Ballet. The material covers Bodenwieser's work in Europe, on tour in various countries and in Australia where she settled in 1939. Australian dancers represented either photographically or in other ways include Anita Ardell, Keith Bain, Margaret Chapple, Coralie Hinkley and Eileen Cramer (Kramer). Works for which significant material, such as scores, photographs, programs, designs and clippings, exists include Demon Machine, Life of the Insects, O World, Cain and Abel, The One and the Many and Central Australian Suite, and Waltzing Matilda. Major Australian photographers whose work is represented include Max Dupain and Margaret Michaelis. Costume designers represented include Cedric Flower and Eileen Cramer (Kramer). Full details of the scope of the collection,
KONZERTDIREKTION GUTMANN (Hugo Knepler)
III. LOTHRINGERSTRASSE 20 (Konzerthaus)
TELEFON Nr. 964-97, 9-14
 Passa: 1, KARLSNERRING 3 (von 10-1 und 3-5 Uhr). TELEFON Nr. 722-97

GROSSER KONZERTHAUS-SAAL
Millwoch, den 24. Februar 1926

Tanzgruppe
Gertrud BODENWIESER

Ausführende:
Die Gruppe: Gertrud Bodenwieser, Trude Burg, Eils Eberlo, Hilde Holger, Hedda
J_service, Marion Rischwa und das vergrößerte Tanzensemble: Trudl Dubsky, Alice
Benze, Elinor Ceran, Friedl Czeppa, Grete Rohlmann, Nora Karpel, Leo
Laufer, Gustl Pelyrek, Miqui Hirner, Lisa Themen, Kollie Tramberg,
Walter Hdl

Miltwirkend: HANS RODENBERG
1. Deutsche
Sprecher KARL FOREST
Volkslieder
Musikalische Leitung: MARCEL LUKER

Programm:
2. Dramatische Tanzszenen

„Der brennende Dornbusch“

nach dem gleichnamigen Drama von OKAR KOKOSCHKA. (Text heilend).
Musik von ALEX TSCHREPPIN.

Der Mann ....... Hans Rodenberg,
Die Frau ....... Gertrud Bodenwieser.
Der brennende Dornbusch.
Die vom Feuer nie Bemühten.

2. Szene: Verzweiflung der suchenden Frauen.
Der Mann vom Weib gelöst, verbrennt im Hof.

PAUSE

Zwischenspiel: W. Brahms.

4. Tanzsuite von Igor Strawinsky:
a) Lied,
b) Burletta,
c) Zwei Karikaturen: Girls.
Exotisches Orchester.

* Ausgeführt von der Kindergruppe: Alma Feller, Trude Goldscheidt, Nelly Jakl, Grete Rohl,
Frauken Landesfer, Olga Rumpf, Hone Reck, Lilly Meng, Trude Manul, Azi Rausch!
Steffi Schall, Stefa Tuthmann.

Idee und Gestaltung aller Tanzszenen von Gertrud Bodenwieser.

Sächsische Mitwirkende ausgebildet von GERTRUD RODENWIESER.

Verlag der Wiener Konzerthausgesellschaft, 81. Lothringergasse 20.

Preis 60 Groschen (inkl. Steuers).

For translation, turn card over.

Source: Trudl Dubsky Archive
The remaining place in the programme is occupied by the Gertrude Bodenwieser Ensemble, who offer some new dances while retaining ‘The Demon Machine’.

GERTRUDE BODENWIESER'S DANCE ENSEMBLE

London Coliseum Publicity, 1929
Source: Trudl Dubsky Archive
Demon Machine on Tour to Japan
1934
Photographer unknown
Source: Emmy Taussig Chest (Barbara Cuckson)
From the cast of the original London production come these seven lovely Yiddish girls to Melbourne: the Bodenwiesser, to perform their delightful and physical dances in the latest C. Z. Folies D’Amour at the Carlton. The Folies D’Amour Revue, “Folies D’Amour,” is the first Jewish musical spectacular revue ever to be brought to Australia, and in its production over 120 people will take part. In these thrilling numbers the Bodenwiesser Dancers perform their impressive 'Machine Age' ballet.

Seven Bodenwiesser Dancers

Folies D’Amour Revue Publicity, Melbourne 1939
Source: Emmy Taussig Chest (Barbara Cuckson)
Japan Tour 1934
Source: Barbara Cuckson
Library Digitised Collections

Author/s:
Brown, Carol

Title:
Materials relating to Gertrud Bodenwieser's Demon Machine

Date:
2017

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